

I waited and watched, hoping sensibility would surface to make the public and political entities aware of what they are losing and at what cost. It is dangerous to get trapped with an idea that turns out to be too expensive and unnecessary. It takes courage to admit this and seek alternatives. My hope is that we have such leadership.

Tasso Katselas

OPEN LETTER TO THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY

Your plan to spend \$1.1 billion to modify our "best airport in the world" by abandoning the landside building and moving its functions out to airside sparked this comment from Blair Pomeroy, a longtime aviation strategy consultant:

"Excess capacity hasn't been an issue with the landside building, which is used mainly by local passengers, not those who are connecting as part of past hub operations." *"You're going to spend \$1.1 billion to save \$23 million? What Wall Street person would ever make that decision?"* *"The money would be better spent lowering landing fees and providing incentives."*
"I think most Pittsburghers would say the landside terminal is more than fine."

This quote and the newspaper sketches of the proposed changes prompted me to suggest you pause and reflect on a series of hard truths:

1. The claim that our airport was designed specifically for a hub operation and therefore requires alterations is not true.
2. Our airport was briefly used as a hub but the design is universal and has changed how future airports are being built.
3. Our airport design has been used internally Abu Dhabi, Mumbai, Mexico City (I did the Master Plan), and Hong Kong (a duplication of Pittsburgh).
4. The landside and airside buildings work in tandem to provide passenger convenience and aircraft efficiency.
5. The proposed schedule to abandon the landside building and link its operations to the airside is not realistic.
6. Existing conditions will compromise any scheme and result in complicated, awkward passenger and vehicular circulation.
7. The proposed road system shown with colorful roadways soaring 45 feet in the air lacks reality.

8. These truths make the \$1.1 billion budget suspect, unrealistic and a high risk facing uncontrolled costs.
9. The "no taxpayer dollars will be used" statement is a cruel joke. The reality is the passengers will pay and cost to fly in and out Pittsburgh will soar.
10. The present airport will be debt free with the retirement of the 30 year bonds and airline fees could be substantially reduced.
11. The present airport has no budget problems, therefore, available money should be invested to improve and replace existing conditions.
12. The airside building should cluster gates to allow construction of expanded concession and conference space.
13. Landside transit and security area should be redesigned to make air travel human again. MAKING PITTSBURGH THE FIRST AIRPORT to process passengers and meeters and greeters out to airside.
14. The existing unique dual road system separating public and commercial vehicles provides direct access to parking, rental car and transportation with dignity and efficiency.
15. Spending over \$1.1 billion to alter the "best airport in the world" has made us the laughing stock of the airline industry. There is time to act sensibly, make the necessary improvements, and keep "the airport Pittsburgh deserves."

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